

THE ENLIGHTENER

Saints Peter and Paul
Orthodox Christian Church
401 Hamilton St., Syracuse, NY

Dear faithful, some have asked: where do the meals come from that are down in the freezer? Some come from the left overs of our Family Dinners, some from our Chicken BBQ, and the majority of these meals come from Syracuse University. Their cafeterias often have left-over food in the evenings, some nights to the amount of 150 pounds of fully cooked food. Instead of throwing out hundreds of pounds of quality food each week, SU has partnered with us to attempt to give us this extra food when they are able. They weigh the food, put it in foil containers, drive it over to us, and then help us put them in the individual containers to freeze. With the cost of inflation as it is and the rise of food costs in general, these meals are invaluable. I've included a few pictures to show you the overall process. Please consider taking some to those in need from the freezer downstairs. If you need them, please take some as well! - *With love and prayers in Christ, Fr. Ambrose*





Our next Family Dinner is:

Monday, November 28th

2pm kitchen volunteers welcome.

4:30pm-6:00pm is dinner.

* We also now have plenty of SU frozen dinners to take & give away to anyone in need. Please take them from the Family Dinner Freezer downstairs.

We have a special ministry training trip:

**Leaving Tuesday,
November 30th and
coming back
Saturday,
December 3rd.**

We will be trained by Fr. Paul Abernathy and his staff in Pittsburg, PA. They will train a group of us on

how to work with those on the streets and especially those who have experienced trauma. <http://neighborhoodresilience.org>.

Hear an interview with Fr. Paul Abernathy on Ancient Faith: [https://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/aftodaylive/orthodox impact in urban neighborhoods](https://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/aftodaylive/orthodox%20impact%20in%20urban%20neighborhoods)





OCF TRIP TO JORDANVILLE MONASTERY

Saturday, Nov. 12th

If you are under 35 and would like to go with them, see Fr. Ambrose.



Thanksgiving Dinner & SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS; Sunday, November 13th after Divine Liturgy

Pay what you can. \$10 suggested donation.
See the Sahn's for more info.



ENTRY OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE

Monday, Nov. 21st

VIGIL on Sunday evening.



FOUNDATION OF OUR ORTHODOX FAITH CLASSES On Saturdays at 3:30pm.

In-person and on Zoom. Join us!



DIOCESAN TEEN RETREAT Nov. 18th - 20th

Fall Teen Retreat being held at a new venue, Camp Ramapo, in Rhinebeck, NY.



COOKIE WALK FUNDRAISER Saturday, December 10th

If you can help make cookies, talk to Daria, Nena, or another lady involved.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:



HOSPITALITY TEAM

If you would like to be notified of individual ministry opportunities to those in need, see Fr. Ambrose and be added to the Hospitality Team list.



CHOIR REHEARSALS ARE ON SATURDAY EVENINGS AFTER VESPERS & ON SUNDAYS ON 9AM. See Larissa and join us for rehearsals!

The Lord Made a Way.

An Interview with Fr. Paul Abernathy

Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick: Welcome to the Orthodox Engagement podcast. Today, my guest is Fr. Paul Abernathy, who is a priest in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, the pastor of St. Moses the Black Orthodox Church in Pittsburgh, and he's also the founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Neighborhood Resilience Project in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. Father Paul, welcome to Orthodox Engagement. Christ is Risen!

Fr. Paul Abernathy: Indeed He is Risen, Fr. Andrew! So good to be with you.

Fr. Andrew: [laughter] Amen. So last summer, when protests and also violence spread all over America in the wake of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Fr. Paul's face was seen and his voice was heard on a lot of interviews done by Orthodox Christian media. But his work did not begin then. He's been faithfully laboring for the past decade in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, where he lives with his family, building what is called the Neighborhood Resilience Project. So, Father, this show is about long-form conversations to get us inside at least a piece of somebody's life and the work that they're doing. So, before we talk about your work, I'd like us to get to know you. So, you know, where did you grow up? How would you describe your family background?

Fr. Paul: Absolutely. Well, I was actually born in Fort Carson, Colorado. My mother and father were both in the Army, so I was born on that Army base. But I was only there for 9 months and my mother was discharged from the Army, came back to Pittsburgh. I grew up about 8 miles outside of the city in an area that was a very fascinating area, a little township [called] South Fayette. It was kind of a middle/low income township. There were a lot of low-income whites and there were housing projects that were predominantly Black. And many of the people in those housing projects, interestingly enough, had originally come from the Hill District. They had been moved into these housing projects as a result of urban renewal. I was not raised Orthodox, but I was raised in a very devout Christian household. And my mother, who as far as I can remember, was actually a single mother, social worker, very devout... my sister and I, she raised us with our grandparents, just had a beautiful childhood experience, so much love. But I learned from my family what really it meant, not only to love God but to love our neighbor, and so having that example of service that was inspired by Christian faith was a very key aspect of my childhood formation.

Fr. Andrew: Now if I remember correctly, your ethnic background—and correct me if I'm wrong about this—you're Black on your father's side and Syrian on your mother's side. Is that right?

Fr. Paul: Yeah, that's correct. And, you know, it's fascinating, I would say there's a lot of similarities between, really, the two cultures.

Fr. Andrew: Oh, really?

Fr. Paul: Yes, yes. Fascinatingly enough, when I was in the summer between my junior and senior year of college—I was an International Studies major—I had the opportunity to actually go and study at the University of Aleppo in Syria and went and had a phenomenal experience. It was the summer of 2000. When I came home, I actually then went into what was called the Mother Jones House. It was at Wheeling Jesuit University. It was a house that was located in a predominantly Black section of Wheeling, West Virginia—East Wheeling—and to live there, you had to do a minimum amount of community service that was classwork that went along with that and it ends up being very helpful for the ministry that I'm doing here today. What's so fascinating about that year is that I really got this perspective that the way many Americans think about the Middle East is very similar to the way many Americans think about African-Americans.

Fr. Andrew: Hmm.

Fr. Paul: And it seems like these two issues are very often issues that many people have very strong opinions on. And so, from that point in my life, I think really I understood there are certain similarities and experiences, and even to some degree, culture.

Fr. Andrew: Hmm, hmm. And it's my understanding also that the Abernathy part of your name actually is attached to people with a little bit of notoriety in American history. Can you say something about that?

Fr. Paul: Yes. [sigh] Well, you know, I did not grow up with my father. I didn't have a chance to be so close to this history other than from what, really, I had always been told, that I was related to the Rev. Ralph Abernathy. And of course, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy was Martin Luther King's right-hand man. Of course, he's known as Rev. Martin Luther King's right-hand man to history. Really, Rev. Ralph Abernathy was Martin Luther King's... initially, he was his mentor.

Fr. Andrew: Hmm.

Fr. Paul: Beautiful thing about him was he understood the gift that Martin Luther King had and really had the humility to step back. You know, someone asked very recently, "How do we find leaders who are prepared to step forward?" I really reflected on so much of my experience in the community. Sometimes, meetings were inundated with people who were trying to be, trying to step forward, put themselves out there. And, you know, I was thinking about the Rev. Ralph Abernathy. My response to that was, "Sometimes it's not knowing when to step forward, sometimes it's about knowing when to step backward."

Fr. Andrew: Yeah. [laughter]

Fr. Paul: And really understanding that sometimes we're called to a particular kind of leadership. Sometimes we're called to a particular kind of direction. And, you know, I think that humility by way of humble leadership is important. It's always been very inspiring to me. And also I think this idea that certainly whenever there is injustice as a result of sin that the pathway forward has got to be one that's deeply rooted in our Christian faith, one that is deeply rooted in a quest for not only justice, but reconciliation. One that is deeply rooted in the unconditional love of God. And so it's a very proud heritage, you know, for me, the Abernathy family. I remember one time—many of my family, they live in Atlanta, Georgia—and I remember one time there was a young man, he had come here to our ministry who, fascinatingly enough, was originally from Atlanta and he had been incarcerated there. And he

saw my name and it was clear to me he wasn't really well-versed in recent history. He had just had these experiences in the streets and spent time in prison. And he said, "You're an Abernathy." He said to me, "You know, I met Abernathys when I was in prison." My first thought was, "Oh, I wonder if he must have been incarcerated with some Abernathys." And I asked him that. I said, "Were you incarcerated with some Abernathys?" He said, "No. I was visited by Abernathys." And, you know, it made a very deep impression on me.

Fr. Andrew: Hmm.

Fr. Paul: It's very consistent with the legacy and heritage of my family. And so I'm very blessed. And you know, one of the things that's really fascinating too—really, actually beautiful to me—that somebody had said to me at one particular point in time, "Abernathy... That's a really big Baptist name, isn't it?" And, you know, when I thought about it, I thought about our legacy and I thought about the work that we're doing in the church, and I thought about the name going forward, and I thought, "You know what, yes, it has been and now my hope is that it's known as an Orthodox name."

Fr. Andrew: Hmm.

Fr. Paul: And, you know, this is my prayer. I believe it's very consistent with the history that my family has.

Fr. Andrew: Yeah. So you said earlier that you did not grow up as an Orthodox Christian. But you're Orthodox Christian now. So... would you mind telling us how that came to be?

Fr. Paul: [pause] Yes, well, you know, it's interesting, because on my Syrian side of the family, they initially were Orthodox when they came to the United States. I believe, like so many other families with Orthodox roots, here there were many who went into other Christian traditions in large part because they didn't have regular access to churches is what happened in so many instances. And so, my family certainly has that experience. You know, I was raised up in the Catholic church and I went to Wheeling Jesuit University, really had a beautiful experience there. What happened was I had had some brief exposure to the Orthodox Church growing up and when I really reflect on my journey, it was clear to me that these small experiences that I had, through extended family, were really quite powerful. At the time, perhaps, I didn't necessarily put it into words. But what really happened to me was the summer between my junior and senior year, as I had referenced earlier, going to study at the University of Aleppo in Aleppo, Syria, I really—I was a Christian at that time and I really wanted to be familiar—because I was going to an unfamiliar culture, really, I mean I'd been around Syrian people, Syrian food, but to be immersed was something totally different.

Fr. Andrew: Hmm. Yeah.

Fr. Paul: I thought that what I would do was I would attend an Antiochian parish just so I could get sort of the flavor of the Syrian kind of Christianity. So I went, more or less, as a matter of observation, perhaps a sociological exercise. And I attended this Divine Liturgy... [laughter]

Fr. Paul: ...at St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in Bridgeville near where I grew up, actually. And I show up to this Liturgy and there, in this Liturgy, I had this very profound, what I would describe as an encounter with the Living God.

Fr. Andrew: Hmm.

Please read the rest of the interview here: https://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/orthodoxengagement/the_lord_made_a_way_fr_paul_abernathy_part_1

November 2022

Note - Please see The Weekly for the most accurate times and services. All times in The Weekly, if they are different from below, will be the most accurate.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
4pm Family Potluck at the Gressel Farm	6pm Vespers	8:15am Confessions 9am Divine Liturgy for Cosmos and Damian Ladies Lunch following Liturgy 7pm OCF	<i>Diocesan Assembly in Endicott, NY with Hierarchical Liturgy</i>	<i>Diocesan Assembly in Endicott, NY</i>		3:30pm Foundations of our Orthodox Faith Class 5pm Great Vespers Followed by Confessions Choir Rehearsal
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8:45am Confessions 9am Choir Rehearsal 9:10am Hours 9:30am Sunday Divine Liturgy	6pm Vespers	8:15am Confessions 9am Divine Liturgy for the Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel 7pm OCF				OCF Trip to Jordanville Monastery. Leaving here around 10am. 3:30pm Foundations of our Orthodox Faith Class 5pm Great Vespers Followed by Confessions Choir Rehearsal
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
8:45am Confessions 9am Choir Rehearsal 9:10am Hours 9:30am Sunday Divine Liturgy for St. John Chrysostom THANKSGIVING DINNER AND SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS		Beginning of the Nativity Fast >> 6pm Vespers 7pm OCF	8:15am Confessions 9am Divine Liturgy for St. Matthew		Wives Evening 6:30pm Diocesan Teen Retreat >>	3:30pm Foundations of our Orthodox Faith Class 5pm Great Vespers Followed by Confessions Choir Rehearsal
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8:45am Confessions 9am Choir Rehearsal 9:10am Hours 9:30am Sunday Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour CHURCH SCHOOL Parish Council Meeting 5PM VIGIL FOR THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS	8:15am Confessions 9AM DIVINE LITURGY FOR ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS		6pm Vespers for St. Katherine	8:15am Confessions 9AM DIVINE LITURGY FOR THANKSGIVING AND ST. KATHERINE		3:30pm Foundations of our Orthodox Faith Class 5pm Great Vespers Followed by Confessions Choir Rehearsal
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
8:45am Confessions 9am Choir Rehearsal 9:10am Hours 9:30am Sunday Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour	3:30pm Volunteers 4:30pm - 6:00pm FAMILY DINNER.	(potential) 8:15am Confessions 9am Divine Liturgy <i>Ministry Training Trip in Pitsburg with Fr. Paul Abernathy >></i>	<i>Ministry Training Trip in Pitsburg with Fr. Paul Abernathy >></i>	<i>Ministry Training Trip in Pitsburg with Fr. Paul Abernathy >></i>	<i>Ministry Training Trip in Pitsburg with Fr. Paul Abernathy >></i>	5pm Great Vespers Followed by Confessions Choir Rehearsal